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LIBYA

Al-Qadhdhafi Addresses University Students

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[Remarks by Libyan Leader Mu'ammār al-Qadhdhafi at a meeting with Al-Nasir University students; date not given — recorded]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] Colonialist political propaganda concentrates on driving a wedge between the Arabs and the black Africans. During the colonial era, European propaganda succeeded, and it is still successful. This is because most of the independent African states — especially those that achieved independence after 1960 — enjoy pseudo-independence; particularly the francophone states. These are still French colonies. The states that achieved some degree of actual political independence are the former Portuguese colonies. This is because Marxist movements were established in these states and are still in power there. Also, Portugal is a small state that grew weaker; it no longer had the ability to influence its former colonies. The latter no longer had a master; therefore, they became independent and began to rule themselves. As for France, it is a major power, capable of attracting its former colonies and capable of providing officials with salaries. It can train and provide weapons for the armies of its former colonies; it can support these former colonies' budgets. The former French colonies have therefore remained under French influence until now.

The anti-Arab Western colonialist propaganda concentrated on driving a wedge between the Arabs and the Africans. It succeeded. This means that many Africans show hatred toward Arabs, more so than toward Europe, which colonized, humiliated, and destroyed them. The Europeans do not resort to propaganda against themselves; they make themselves popular with the Africans. Consequently, the African loves the European but hates the Arab. The Europeans colonized the Africans, but there is no anti-European feeling among the Africans. Yet the Europeans spread anti-Arab propaganda among the Africans. We did not colonize these states; they did not hear our voice, and we did not defend ourselves. They [the Europeans] told them [the Africans]: Those who occupied North Africa — the area extending to Damascus and the Middle East — are Arabs. They are dangerous; they are colonialists, and it is possible they will march against you.

This type of propaganda is now successful in Chad. That is to say, the Chadian politicians may hate the Libyans but do not hate the Americans and the French. They seek assistance from the French forces and fight against the Libyan forces. Why? Because Western propaganda succeeded in making the Africans hate the Arabs. It told them that the Arabs are colonialists. Now Chadians regard Arabs as colonialists — they regard Libyans as colonialists — while they do not look upon the French or the Americans as such.

Actually, the real colonialist is the European, the Westerner, the French, and the American. These are the people who are really colonizing Chad, Africa, and Libya. [as heard] But because the

European and the Westerner are the masters and are successful in their propaganda, they rule. The Arab homeland should therefore be isolated from the south, as the anti-Arab movements come from the south. There is now an anti-Arab movement in southern Sudan. [passage omitted]

Now there is an intensified hostility toward Libya created by the Western states. They talk about Libyan missiles which can reach southern Europe. This is an exaggeration. A Libyan missile might cover a distance of 100 km, but they say that it can travel 1,000 km. They try to magnify the ugly picture they want to implant in the minds of the West, so that the West will prepare to invade and persecute the Arab homeland. They say: Look, there is a new power emerging on the southern shores of the Mediterranean, and this will mean a new series of conquests. They want to remind the West of the Arab conquests of southern Italy, Spain, and the islands of the Mediterranean. They say that the Arabs will rape women and destroy towns and churches. Their books are full of such stories. We could not have done such things. Our books have nothing like that. These books speak about our victories in this or that battle. But their books are terrible. [passage omitted]

Now the blacks are being incited by the colonialist Western states, the colonialist circles. They are pushing the blacks to act against the Arabs. There are movements south of the Arab homeland — south of Sudan, Libya, Mauritania, and Algeria — and Europe and the United States are behind all of them. The West is behind these movements. The West wants to bring pressure to bear on the Arab homeland. Why is there such enmity? Why does this homeland always face such pressure? The West has no ambitions with regard to the people, the Arabs, men or women. The West wants the land, the bridge. The Arab homeland by its shape constitutes a land bridge. All the powers that have imperialist interests — interests outside their own borders — want to control this bridge.

The Suez Canal, the Bab el-Mandeb. [Al-Qadhdhafi here addresses one of the people who is close to the map] Please point to these on the map, Salih. Please come here, one of you. This is the Suez Canal; it is a gate from the north to the south. Then there is the Bab el-Mandeb, which is the second gate. Then the Strait of Hormuz — it is also a gate — and the Strait of Gibraltar. Look at these international gates. Europe is to the north, and Africa is to the south. The Arab homeland is a bridge, from west to east and from east to west. The aim is to seize this bridge. On the one hand, they want to seize these gates and these international strategic points. If there is resistance in these parts, they cannot seize them. How can resistance succeed? It succeeds through the activities of the population and the military.

This is why they concentrated on keeping this region backward, so that the defensive capability of this area is weakened. Thus the major conspiracy is to deceive us, particularly with regard to oil. The reactionary, ignorant, and backward political regimes — against which there have been revolutions that have not yet succeeded — and those who have established these regimes are deceiving us by transforming us into a consumer market. They kept us away from genuine production, and cultures based on consumption spread. Shops in the Arab homeland spread. There are 100,000 merchants in Damascus. There should be 100,000

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farmers, blacksmiths, carpenters, and electricians in Damascus, not 100,000 merchants. [passage omitted]

Generally speaking, there is a real danger to the region between the ocean and Gulf. The oases will run dry as a result of the use of pumps. The overpopulated towns that have no resources will face problems and become dilapidated. There is continuous enmity toward the homeland by an advance from the south. Hostile European propaganda has succeeded in creating armed movements against the Arab homeland and its southern parts: southern Libya, southern Sudan, southern Mauritania, etc.

The West is getting ready, and what we have seen are only the preliminaries — the NATO attack against Libya, Israeli military capability, the destruction of the Arab homeland from within, the destruction of Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, and Tunisia — all these are preliminaries. What some call Israel is a bridgehead. Israel sends a force to the area it wants to occupy in order to establish a foothold, a bridgehead, so that the bigger force can cross over. Western colonialism will inevitably come. These are preliminaries leading to the military phase. First propaganda is used, lackeys are sent, and coups are hatched or crushed.

But now the military phase to occupy the Arab homeland has begun. Do not rule out the possibility that utterances will change and that they will begin to talk about the necessity of occupying this or that place. Now the United States is talking about the Gulf. The Gulf does not belong to it. The United States says that the Gulf affects its security, and it declares a state of emergency during the Reagan era because Libya threatens U.S. interests at home and abroad. This state of emergency means that the U.S. President has the power, without consulting with Congress, to make any decision, such as to attack Libya. The state of emergency finds its own justifications. Tomorrow they may say: We fear for international communications from attacks by terrorists; therefore, the peace-loving and rational power that is responsible for security is seizing such communications. We will then see the United States occupying Gibraltar, the Suez Canal, Bab el-Mandeb, etc.

Imagine the Gulf of Sidra — they left all other parts of the sea and came to the stretch which lies between Misratah and Banghazi! The United States says at international forums that international navigation in the Mediterranean is being threatened by Al-Qadhdhafi and that it is inevitable that the United States should impose its presence in the interest of international navigation. We told them: Suppose a ship travels through the Gulf of Sidra heading for Ghadamis or Jufrah, how can you consider this international navigation? Have we barred the way to all those crossing the Mediterranean or said that one can no longer travel in the Mediterranean from east to west or from north to south?

Look at their excuse! They fought us. There was a battle that took place between them and us at the line of death. We downed four of their aircraft. They hit two of our ships. Scores of Libyan sailors died at the line of death. Americans were killed; their aircraft were downed. They came here and said that it was in defense of their freedom. [passage omitted]

In addition to the occupation of this bridgehead, the capture of the Mediterranean is vital as far as the imperialists are concerned because the Arab coastline is very important from the military, commercial, and tourist points of view. I mean the entire Arab coastline, from Mauritania to Syria. It faces Europe. If there is a force on this coastline, it may threaten southern Europe. I told you that when their propaganda claims that Libya possesses missiles which can reach southern Europe, it is a warning that the southern coastline of the Mediterranean will be occupied. [passage omitted]

Reagan issued so much propaganda that, had he wanted to drop an atomic bomb on Libya, he could have gotten most Americans to agree with him. He lied. He asked the American people: Have you heard about the squad which has come to kill me? The people said: Yes, we have heard. There was no proof. He told them a pack of lies. He said: We should put an end to the Libyan regime; we are only defending our homes. He told them that there is a line of death in the Mediterranean and it is dangerous. Do you see the injustice?

They say that the Palestinians are terrorists. Why? Because the Palestinians reject their bridgehead, Israel. They justify any action taken against the Palestinians. They say that the PLO is a terrorist organization. Putting an end to the PLO satisfies Israel. When one fights and establishes a bridgehead one has to defend such a bridgehead, and now they are defending their bridgehead, Israel. They defend against those undermining the bridgehead. They say: Allow us to strike against the Palestinians, the Syrians, the Libyans, and the Lebanese. Why? Because all these support the Palestinians.

Every potential revolution in the Arab homeland is being aborted. This is because [words indistinct] there is no socialism, no production, and no military power. They say that the vacuum should be filled by the imperialist powers. This state of affairs continues; this is the reason behind our loss in all the revolutions that took place in the Arab homeland. They are now concentrating on the Libyan revolution because it is a positive phenomenon and has a sound orientation; for this reason they say that it should be liquidated. They created the Muslim Brotherhood, the Islamic Liberation Party, the mujahidin, etc.; U.S. intelligence was behind all of these. They also formed movements in Chad. They will create any false organization in order to mislead the people. [words indistinct]

Now the United States has access to bases for its deployment force in a number of Arab countries; this was agreed on in advance. But it cannot do this in Libya or in Syria. Take Egypt, for example: The United States at any time can bring all its forces to Egypt and from there deploy them anywhere. It cannot do so in Libya; hence, it struggles against Libya. They struggled against 'Abd al-Nasir and now against Libya. They cannot do the same in Algeria. We have talked about the things we should guard against and about certain problems. In the next lecture, God willing, we will talk about the solutions. Wait for the next lecture.